

What is claimed is:

1. A method for electronically ordering and activating a user content subscription comprising the steps of:
 - (a) identifying at least one content distributor available to a user;
 - (b) identifying a price to the user for a programming service from the at least one content distributor;
 - (c) presenting an offer for said programming service to the user for said price;
 - (d) receiving an acceptance of said offer for said programming service for said price;
and
 - (e) activating said programming service.
2. The method according to claim 1, wherein said (e) comprises:
 - (1) determining whether activation fails; and
 - (2) forwarding said acceptance of said offer for said programming service to the at least one content distributor, if said activation fails.
3. The method according to claim 2, wherein said activation fails when at least one of:
communication fails with the at least one content distributor;
communication with a device of the user fails; and
activation is denied.

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4. The method according to claim 1, wherein said offer comprises:

- a programming service price; and
- a promotional offer.

5. The method according to claim 4, wherein said programming service price comprises at least one of:

- a user-tailored programming service price;
- a tiered user service level price;
- a user demographically-tailored programming service price; and
- a user psychographically-tailored programming service price.

6. The method according to claim 4, wherein said programming service price comprises at least one of:

- a general price;
- a content distributor– specific price; and
- a discounted price.

7. The method according to claim 4, wherein said promotional offer comprises at least one of:

- a user-tailored offer;
- a rebate;
- a discount;

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- a free install;
- a free term of service;
- a gift certificate;
- a redemption certificate;
- a coupon;
- a content distributor– specific offer;
- a user demographically-tailored offer;
- a user psychographically-tailored offer; and
- a special offer associated with the at least one content distributor.

8. The method according to claim 1, wherein said step (a) comprises:

- (1) receiving an indication of a location of the user; and
- (2) querying a database that maps the at least one content distributor to said indication of said location of the user.

9. The method according to claim 1, wherein the at least one content distributor comprises at least one of:

- a cable television (CATV) content distributor;
- a satellite content distributor;
- a wired content distributor;
- a wireless content distributor;
- an Internet content distributor; and

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a multi-channel video program distributor (MVPD).

10. The method according to claim 1, wherein the at least one content distributor comprises:
a content distributor presently delivering content to the user.
11. The method according to claim 8, wherein said indication of said location of the user
comprises at least one of: a zip code; a phone number; an address; an internet protocol (IP)
address; a geographical indication; a global positioning system (GPS) identified location; and
a reverse 411 identified location.
12. The method according to claim 1, wherein said offer comprises at least one of:
a programming service price;
a promotional offer;
a rebate;
a free install;
a free term of service;
a gift certificate;
a local rebate;
a national rebate;
a local offer;
a national offer;
a targeted offer;

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an offer targeted to the user using at least one of demographic and psychographic information about the user;

a discount;

a content distributor-specific offer;

a user-tailored programming service price;

a tiered user service level price;

a user demographically –tailored offer;

a user demographically –tailored programming service price;

a user psychographically –tailored offer;

a user psychographically –tailored programming service price;

an offer associated with the at least one content distributor presently delivering content to the user;

a programming service price associated with the at least one content distributor presently delivering content to the user;

a redemption certificate; and

a coupon.

13. The method according to claim 1, wherein said step (e) comprises at least one of:
- (1) activating a billing system; and
 - (2) activating an access control system to distribute said programming service to the user.

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14. The method according to claim 13, wherein said step (2) comprises at least one of:

Placing a programming service in a channel guide of the user;
activating said programming service;
providing access to said programming service; and
enabling premises equipment to decode said programming service.

15. The method according to claim 1, wherein said step (d) comprises at least one of:

(1) receiving said acceptance via at least one of:

a set-top box,
a television (TV),
a browser,
a digital video recorder (DVR),
a computer,
a personal digital assistant (PDA),
a wireless device,
a communications device,
a phone, and
an Internet browser.

16. The method according to claim 1, wherein said step (a) comprises:

(1) identifying at least one content distributor having capability to deliver
content to a user.

17. The method according to claim 1, wherein said step (a) comprises:

(1) identifying at least one content distributor presently delivering content to a user.

18. The method according to claim 1, further comprising, prior to said (a):

(f) transmitting an electronic postcard from a sending user to a receiving user wherein said postcard comprises information about programming service content, and wherein said postcard comprises a link to the method for electronically ordering and activating the user content subscription.

19. A system for electronically ordering and activating a user content subscription comprising:

content distributor identification means for identifying at least one content distributor available to a user;

pricing means for identifying a price to the user for a programming service from the at least one content distributor;

presentment means for presenting an offer for said programming service to the user for said price;

acceptance means for receiving an acceptance of said offer for said programming service for said price; and

activation means for activating said programming service.

20. The system according to claim 19, wherein said activation means comprises:
- means for determining whether activation fails; and
 - means for forwarding said acceptance of said offer for said programming service to the at least one content distributor, if said activation fails.
21. The system according to claim 20, wherein said activation fails when at least one of:
- communication fails with the at least one content distributor;
 - communication with a device of the user fails; and
 - activation is denied.
22. The system according to claim 19, wherein said offer comprises:
- a programming service price; and
 - a promotional offer.
23. The system according to claim 22, wherein said programming service price comprises at least one of :
- a user-tailored programming service price;
 - a tiered user service level price;
 - a user demographically-tailored programming service price; and
 - a user psychographically-tailored programming service price.

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24. The system according to claim 22, wherein said programming service price comprises at

least one of :

a general price;

a content distributor– specific price;

a discounted price.

25. The system according to claim 22, wherein said promotional offer comprises:

a user-tailored offer;

a rebate;

a discount;

a free install;

a free term of service;

a gift certificate;

a redemption certificate;

a coupon;

a content distributor– specific offer;

a user demographically-tailored offer;

a user psychographically-tailored offer; and

a special offer associated with the at least one content distributor.

26. The system according to claim 19, wherein said content identification means comprises:

means for receiving an indication of a location of the user; and

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means for querying a database that maps the at least one content distributor to said indication of said location of the user.

27. The system according to claim 19, wherein the at least one content distributor comprises at least one of:

- a cable television (CATV) content distributor;
- a satellite content distributor;
- a wired content distributor;
- a wireless content distributor;
- an Internet content distributor; and
- a multi-channel video program distributor (MVPD).

28. The system according to claim 26, wherein said indication of said location of the user comprises at least one of: a zip code; a phone number; an address; an internet protocol (IP) address; a geographical indication; a global positioning system identified location; and a reverse 411 identified location.

29. The system according to claim 19, wherein said offer comprises at least one of:

- a programming service price;
- a promotional offer;
- a rebate;
- a national rebate;

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a local rebate;

a free install;

a free term of service;

a gift certificate;

a local rebate;

a national rebate;

a promotional offer;

a local offer;

a national offer;

a targeted offer;

an offer targeted to the user using at least one of demographic and psychographic information about the user;

a discount;

a content distributor-specific offer;

a user-tailored programming service price;

a tiered user service level price;

a user demographically –tailored offer;

a user demographically –tailored programming service price;

a user psychographically –tailored offer;

a user psychographically –tailored programming service price;

an offer associated with the at least one content distributor presently delivering content to the user;

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a programming service price associated with the at least one content distributor presently delivering content to the user;a redemption certificate; and
a coupon.

30. The system according to claim 19, wherein said activation means comprises at least one of:

billing means for activating a billing system; and
access means for activating an access control system to distribute said programming service to the user.

31. The system according to claim 30, wherein said access means comprises at least one of:

means for placing in a channel guide of the user;
means for activating said content;
means for providing access to said content; and
means for enabling premises equipment to decode said content.

32. The system according to claim 19, wherein said acceptance means comprises at least one of:

means for receiving said acceptance via at least one of:
a set-top box,
a television (TV),
a browser,

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a digital video recorder (PVR),
a computer,
a personal digital assistant (PDA),
a wireless device,
a communications device,
a phone, and
an Internet browser.

33. The system according to claim 19, wherein said content distributor identification means comprises:

means for identifying at least one content distributor having capability to deliver content to a user.

34. The system according to claim 19, wherein content distributor identification means comprises:

means for identifying at least one content distributor presently delivering content to a user.

35. The system according to claim 19, further comprising:

means for transmitting an electronic postcard from a sending user to a receiving user wherein said postcard comprises information about programming service content, and wherein

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said postcard comprises a link to the system for electronically ordering and activating the user content subscription.

36. A computer program product embodied on a computer readable medium comprising program logic for instantaneously activating enhanced content comprising:

content distributor identification means for enabling a computer to identify at least one content distributor available to a user;

pricing means for enabling the computer to identify a price to the user for a programming service from the at least one content distributor;

presentment means for enabling the computer to present an offer for said programming service to the user for said price;

acceptance means for enabling the computer to receive an acceptance of said offer for said programming service for said price; and

activation means for enabling the computer to activate said programming service.